

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed August 10, 2006 has been carefully considered. Editorial revisions have been made to claim 1. Claim 13 has been newly added. Support for claim 13 can be found throughout the specification and the figures. No new matter has been added. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-13.

Claim Objections

Formal objection has been made to claim 1 for a typographical error. Applicants assert appropriate correction has been made. The objection is overcome. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections

Claim 1-3, and 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,482,039 to Phommachanh et al. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites, in part, at least two input contacts in the first row and at least two input contacts in the second row being connected to the output contacts in each plug connector.

Phommachanh does not disclose or suggest that **each** plug connector is connected to at least two input contacts in the first row **and** at least two input contacts in the second row. None of the plug connectors in Phommachanh connect to input contacts in both rows of input contacts. Rather, Phommachanh discloses a jack assembly having first and second positions. In the first position, the input contacts in the first row connect to the input contacts in the second row, and not to the plug connectors. In the second position, the input contacts in the first row connect to a first plug connector and the input contacts in the second row connect to a second plug connector. See e.g., *Phommachanh*, Abstract.

Furthermore, none of the cited references overcome the shortcomings of Phommachanh. Neither U.S. Patent No. 6,419,526 to Fair et al. nor U.S. Patent No. 6,609,929 to Kamarauskas et al. disclose or suggest that each plug connector is connected to at least two input contacts in the first row and at least two input contacts in the second row. Fair merely discloses a modular jack having two rows of plug connectors that couple to each other. Kamarauskas discloses an electrical connector having two mating subassemblies defining complementary jack receptacles.

For at least these reasons, Phommachanh does not anticipate claim 1. Claims 2, 3, and 12 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 1-3 and 12 is respectfully requested.

Claims 4-11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Phommachanh, in view of Fair and Kamarauskas. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 4-11 depend from claim 1 and are allowable over the combination of Phommachanh, Fair, and Kamarauskas for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 4-11 is respectfully requested.

New Claim

Claim 13 has been newly added. Support for claim 13 can be found throughout the specification and figures.

Claim 13 recites, in part, a plug connector being electrically coupled to at least two input contacts in a first row of input contacts and at least two input contacts in a second row of input contacts. Applicants assert claim 13 is allowable over the cited references for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Consideration and allowance of claim 13 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.



Date: Jan. 10, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
(612) 332-5300

By: [Signature]
Name: Steven C. Bruess
Reg. No.: 34,130
SCB/JKS:bog